Prayers of Saint Thérèse

AN ACT OF OBLATION

AS

A VICTIM OF DIVINE LOVE

This Prayer was found after the death of Sister Teresa of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face in the copy of the Gospels which she carried night close to her heart.

O my God, O Most Blessed Trinity, I desire to love Thee and to make Thee loved – to labor for the glory of Holy Church by saving souls here upon earth and by delivering those suffering in Purgatory. I desire to fulfill perfectly Thy Holy Will, and to reach the degree of glory Thou hast prepared for me in Thy Kingdom. In a word, I wish to be holy, but, knowing how helpless I am, I beseech Thee, my God, to be Thyself my holiness.

Since Thou hast loved me so much as to give me Thy Only-Begotten Son to be my Savior and my Spouse, then infinite treasures of His merits are mine. Gladly do I offer them to Thee, and I beg of Thee to behold me only through the Eyes of Jesus, and in His Heart aflame with love. Moreover, I offer Thee all the merits of the Saints both of Heaven and of earth, together with their acts of love, and those of the holy Angels. Lastly, I offer Thee, O Blessed Trinity, my dearest Mother—to her I commit this Oblation, praying her to present it to Thee.

During the days of His life on earth her Divine Son, my sweet Spouse, spoke these words: *"If you ask the Father anything in My Name, He will give it to you."*[1] Therefore I am certain Thou wilt fulfill my longing. O my God, I know that the more Thou wishest to bestow, the more Thou dost make us desire. In my heart I feel boundless desires, and I confidently beseech Thee to take possession of my soul. I cannot receive The in Holy Communion as often as I should wish ; but, O Lord, art not Thou all-powerful ? Abide in me as Thou dost in the Tabernacle—never abandon Thy Little Victim. I long to console Thee for ungrateful sinners, and I implore Thee to take from me all liberty to sin. If through weakness I should chance to fall, may a glance from Thine Eyes straightaway cleanse my soul, and consume all my imperfections—as fire transforms all things into itself.

I thank Thee, O MY God, for all the graces Thou hast granted me : especially for having purified me in the crucible of suffering. At the Day of Judgment I shall gaze on Thee with joy, as Thou bearest Thy scepter of the Cross. And since Thou hast deigned to give me this precious Cross as my portion, I hope to be like unto Thee in Paradise and to behold the Sacred Wounds of Thy Passion shine on my glorified body.

After earth's exile I trust to possess Thee in the Home of our Father ; but I do not seek to lay up treasures in Heaven. I wish to labor for Thy Love alone—with the sole aim of pleasing Thee, of consoling Thy Sacred Heart, and of saving souls who will love Thee through Eternity.

[1] John xvi. 23.

When comes the evening of life, I shall stand before Thee with empty hands, because I do not ask Thee, My God, to take account of my works. All our works of justice are blemished in Thine Eyes. I wish therefore to be robed with Thine own Justice, and to receive from Thy Love the everlasting gift of Thyself. I desire no other Throne, no other Crown but Thee, O my Beloved?

In Thy sight time is naught—*"one day is a thousand years."*[2] Thou canst in a single instant prepare me to appear before Thee.

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In order that my life may be one Act of perfect Love, I offer myself as a Victim of Holocaust to Thy Merciful Love, imploring Thee to consume me unceasingly, and to allow the floods of infinite tenderness gathered up in Thee to overflow into my soul, so that I may become a very martyr of Thy Love, O my God! May this martyrdom, after having prepared me to appear in Thy Presence, free me from this life at the last, and may my soul take flight—without delay—into the eternal embrace of Thy Merciful Love!

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O my Beloved, I desire at every beat of my heart to renew this Oblation an infinite number of times, *"till the shadows retire,"*[3] and everlastingly I can tell Thee my love fact to face.

Mary Frances Teresa of the Child Jesus
And of the Holy Face.

The ninth of June,
Feast of the Most Blessed Trinity,
In the year of grace, 1895

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A Morning Prayer

O my God ! I offer Thee all my actions of this day for the intentions and for the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I desire to sanctify every beat of my heart, my every thought, my simplest works, by uniting them to Its infinite merits ; and I wish to make reparation for my sins by casting them into the furnace of Its Merciful Love.

O my God ! I ask thee for myself and for those whom I hold dear, the grace to fulfill perfectly Thy Holy Will, to accept for love of Thee the joys and sorrows of this passing life, so that we may one day be united together in Heaven for all Eternity. Amen.

[2] Ps. xxxix. 4.
[3] Cant. iv. 6.

AN ACT OF CONSECRATION

TO THE

HOLY FACE

Written for the Novices

O Adorable Face of Jesus, since Thou hast deigned to make special choice of our souls, in order to give Thyself to them, we come to consecrate these souls to Thee. We seem, O Jesus, to hear Thee say : "*Open to Me, My Sisters, My Spouses, for My Face is wet with dew, and My Locks with the drops of the night."* [4] our souls understand Thy language of love ; we desire to wipe Thy sweet Face, and to console Thee for the contempt of the wicked. In their eyes Thou art still *'as it were hidden . . . they esteem Thee an object of reproach."*[5]

O Blessed Face, more lovely than the lilies and the roses of spring, Thou art not hidden from us. The tears which dim Thine Eyes are as precious as pearls which we delight to gather, and, through their infinite value, to purchase the souls of our brethren. From Thy Adorable Lips we have heard the loving plaint *: "I Thirst."* Since we know that this thirst which consumes Thee is a thirst for love, to quench it we would wish to possess an infinite love.

Dear Spouse of our souls, if we could with the love of all hearts, that love would be Thine. . . . Give us, O Lord, this love ! Then come to thy spouses and satisfy Thy Thirst.

And give to, us souls, dear Lord . . . We thirst for souls !—Above all for the souls of Apostles and Martyrs . . . that through we may inflame all poor sinners with love of Thee.

O Adorable Face, we shall succeed in winning this grace from Thee ! Unmindful of our exile, *" the rivers of Babylon,"* we will sing in Thine Ears the sweetest of melodies. Since Thou art the true and only Home of our souls, *our songs shall not be sung in a strange land.* [6] O Beloved Face of Jesus, while we await the Eternal Day when we shall gaze upon Thine Infinite Glory, our only desire is to delight Thy Divine Eyes by keeping our faces hidden too, so that no one on earth may recognize us . . . Dear Jesus, Heaven for us is Thy Hidden Face!

VARIOUS PRAYERS

" If you ask the Father anything in My Name, He will give it to you."—John xvi. 23.

O Eternal Father, Thy Only-Begotten Son, the dear Child Jesus, belongs to me since Thou hast given Him. I offer Thee the infinite merits of His Divine Childhood, and I beseech in His Name to open the gates of Heaven to a countless host of little ones who will for ever follow this Divine Lamb.

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[4] *Cf.* Cant. v. 2.
[5] *Cf.* Isa. Liii. 3.
[6] *Cf.* Ps.

" Just as the King's image is a talisman through which anything may be purchased in his kingdom, so through His Adorable Face—that priceless coin of my Humanity—you will obtain all that you desire."

Our Lord to Sister Mary of St. Peter[7]

Eternal Father, since Thou hast given me for my inheritance the Adorable Face of Thy Divine Son, I offer that Face to Thee, and I beg Thee, in exchange for this *coin* of infinite value, to forget the ingratitude of those souls who are consecrated to Thee, and to pardon all sinners.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY CHILD

O Jesus, dear Holy Child, my only treasure, I abandon myself to Thy every whim. I seek no other joy that that of calling forth Thy sweet Smile. Vouchsafe to me the graces and the virtues of Thy Holy Childhood, so that on the day of my birth into Heaven the Angels and Saints may recognize in Thy Spouse : *Teresa of the Child Jesus.*

PRAYER TO THE HOLY FACE

O adorable face of Jesus, sole beauty which ravisheth my heart, vouchsafe to impress on my soul Thy Divine Likeness, so it may not be possible for Thee to look at Thy Spouse without beholding Thyself. O my Beloved, for love of Thee I am content not to see here on earth the sweetness of Thy Glance, not to feel the ineffable Kiss of Thy Sacred Lips, but I beg of Thee to inflame me with Thy Love, so that it may consume me quickly, and that soon *Teresa of the Holy Face* may behold Thy glorious Countenance in Heaven.

PRAYER

Inspired by the sight of a statue of the Blessed Joan of Arc

O Lord God of Hosts, who hast said in Thy Gospel : " *I am not come to bring peace but a sword,"* [8] arm me for the combat. I burn to do battle for Thy Glory, but I pray thee to enliven my courage. . . . Then with holy David I shall be able to exclaim : " *Thou alone art my shield, it is Thou, O Lord Who teachest my hands to fight."* [9]

O my Beloved, I know the warfare in which I am to engage ; it is not on the open field I shall fight. . . . I am a prisoner held captive by Thy Love ; of my own free will I have riveted the fetters which bind me to Thee, and cut me off for ever from the world. My sword is Love ! with it—like Joan of Arc—" I will drive the strangers from the land, and I will have Thee proclaimed King"—over the Kingdom of souls.

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[7] Sister Mary of St. Peter entered the Carmel of Tours in 1840. Three years later she had the first of a series of revelations concerning devotion to the Holy Face as a means of reparation for blasphemy. See *Life of Leon Papin-Dupont,* known as "The Holy Man of Tours."

[8] Matt. x. 34.

[9] *Cf.* Ps. cxliii. 1, 2.

Of a truth Thou hast no need of so weak an instrument as I, but Joan, Thy chaste and valiant Spouse, has said : "We must do battle before God gives the victory." O my Jese4s! I will do battle, then, for Thy love, until the evening of my life. AS Thou didst not will to enjoy rest upon earth, I wish to follow Thy example ; and then this promise which came from Thy Sacred Lips will be fulfilled in me *" If any man minister to Me, let him follow Me, and where I am there also shall My servant be, and . . . him will My Father honor."*[10] To be with Thee, to be in Thee, that is my one desire ; this promise of fulfillment, which Thou dost give, helps me to bear with my exile as I wait the Joyous Day when I shall see Thee face to face.

PRAYER TO OBTAIN HUMILITY

Written for a Novice

O Jesus ! When Thou wast a wayfarer upon Earth, Thou didst say : *" Learn of Me, for I am Meek and Humble of Heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls.."* [11] O Almighty King of Heaven ! my soul indeed finds rest in seeing Thee condescend to wash the feet of Thy Apostles—*"having taken the form of a slave."* [12] I recall the words Thou didst utter to teach me the practice of humility : *" I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also. The servant is not greater than his Lord . . . If you know these things, you shall be blessed if you do them."* [13] I understand, dear Lord, these words which come from Thy Meek and Humble Heart, and I wish to put them in practice with the help of Thy grace.

I desire to humble myself in all sincerity, and to submit my will to that of my Sisters, without ever contradicting them, and without questioning whether the have the right to command. No one, O my Beloved ! had that right over Thee, and yet Thou didst obey not only the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, but even Thy executioners. And now, in the Holy Eucharist, I see Thee complete Thy self-abasement, O Divine King of Glory, with wondrous humility, Thou dost submit Thyself to all Thy Priests, without any distinction between those who love Thee and those who, alas ! are lukewarm or cold in Thy service. They may advance or delay the hour of the Holy Sacrifice : Thou art always ready to come down from Heaven at their call.

O my Beloved, under the white Eucharistic Veil Thou dost indeed appear to me Meek and Humble of Heart ! To teach me humility, Thou canst not further abase Thyself, and so I wish to respond to Thy Love, by putting myself in the lowest place, by sharing Thy humiliation, so that I may *"have part with Thee"*[14] in the Kingdom of Heaven.

I implore Thee, dear Jesus, to send me a humiliation whensoever I try to set myself above others.

And yet, dear Lord, Thou knowest my weakness. Each morning I resolve to be humble, and in the evening recognize that I have often been guilty of pride. The sight of these faults tempts me to discouragement ; yet I know that discouragement is itself but a

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[10] John. xii. 26.
[11] Matt. xi. 29.
[12] John. xiii. 15-17.
[13] Phil. ii. 7.
[14] *Cf.* John xiii. 8.

form of pride. I wish, therefore, O my God, to build all my trust upon Thee. As Thou canst do all things, deign to implant in my soul this virtue which I desire, and to obtain it from Thy Infinite Mercy, I will often say to Thee : *" Jesus, Meek and Humble of Heart, male my heart like unto Thine."*

MOTTO OF THE LITTLE FLOWER

From St. John of the Cross

"Love is repaid by Love alone"

"MY DAYS OF GRACE"

Birthday	*January 2, 1873*
Baptism.	*January 4, 1873*
The Smile of Our Lady	*May 10, 1883*
First Communion	*May 8, 1884*
Confirmation	*June 14, 1884*
Conversion.	*December 25, 1886*
Audience with Leo XII.	*November 20, 1887*
Entry into Carmel	*April 9, 1888*
Clothing	*January 10, 1889*
Profession	*September 8, 1890*
Taking of the Veil	*September 24, 1890*
Act of Oblation.	*June 9, 1894*

[ENTRY INTO HEAVEN – *September 30, 1897]*